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The Burning House

燃烧的房子

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情人的回忆

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出版前言

常言道是：“熟读唐诗三百首，不会作诗也会吟。”这句话无疑说明了熟能生巧之类的道理，同时也表明了阅读或朗诵的重要性。学诗如此，学一门外语也不例外。

“英语新干线丛书”就是一套专门为青少年学生和英语爱好者设计的英语阅读与朗诵文选。鉴于这一特定读者群的年龄特点，丛书尽可能精选新潮英语时文，希望能以新颖的选材、精彩的故事、地道的语言和精彩的图片体现青春动感与时尚趣味。

“英语新干线丛书”力争做到寓学于乐、寓教于学，以便读者在休闲阅读、快乐阅读中学习英语知识，感受西方文化，领略异国风情。为此，译注者不仅为难词和惯用法加了文内注释，而且有的放矢地就重要的语法难点做了说明，还在书中配了众多富于异国特色的图片。另外，书中还配有适量的阅读与理解选择题，旨在培养读者实际应用英文的能力。

“英语新干线”各书均配有参考译文，译文力求忠实、准确。值得特别指出的是，我们特意把译文与原文分开编排，不采取英汉对照的形式，因为我们认为，既然是学习英文，就应该尽量多看英文少看中文，就应该直接通过英文去理解，直接用英文去思考，在纯粹的英文氛围中学好英文。



Contents

目 录

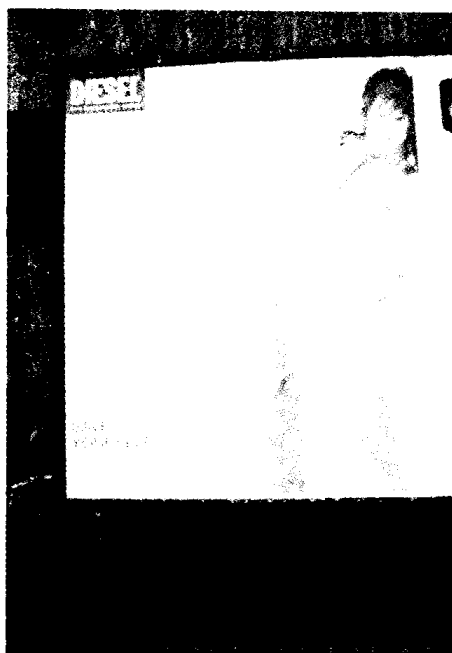
1. The Only Witness
惟一的目击证人 (1)
2. A Mural
一幅壁画 (14)
3. The Cruiser
猎艳先生 (22)
4. Hearts and Hands

心与手	(32)
5. Kitten in the Rain	
雨中的猫咪	(39)
6. Beard and Inger(1)	
胡子和银鸽(一)	(47)
7. Beard and Inger(2)	
胡子和银鸽(二)	(58)
8. Beard and Inger(3)	
胡子和银鸽(三)	(67)
9. The Major and His Adjutant	
少校与副官	(75)
10. The Sniper	
狙击手	(83)
11. After Twenty Years	
相约二十年后	(92)
12. The Burning House(1)	
燃烧的房子(一)	(101)
13. The Burning House(2)	
燃烧的房子(二)	(111)
14. The Burning House(3)	
燃烧的房子(三)	(119)
15. The Burning House(4)	
燃烧的房子(四)	(128)
16. The Burning House(5)	
燃烧的房子(五)	(135)

参考译文

1. 惟一的目击证人 (143)
2. 一幅壁画 (150)
3. 猎艳先生 (154)
4. 心与手 (159)
5. 雨中的猫咪 (162)
6. 胡子和银鸽(一) (166)
7. 胡子和银鸽(二) (172)
8. 胡子和银鸽(三) (176)
9. 少校与副官 (180)
10. 狙击手 (183)
11. 相约二十年后 (188)
12. 燃烧的房子(一) (192)
13. 燃烧的房子(二) (197)
14. 燃烧的房子(三) (201)
15. 燃烧的房子(四) (206)
16. 燃烧的房子(五) (209)

Key to Exercises



1. The Only Witness

惟一的目击证人

“The North Beach *homicide* (杀人; 杀人者) is still unsolved. The case had been put on hold after six months investigation.” Line stares at the newspaper *clipping* (剪

报)。He raped and murdered her best friend, Anne. Why haven't the police been able to catch him? He's out there somewhere! She knows it. She's seen him. Right in the middle of Oslo, in broad daylight. Did he see her too? Will she be his next victim?

“Run Line! Get out of here! Don't worry about me, save yourself!”

Anne's face is all red and twisted in pain, her legs naked against the dark leather seat.^① What kind of car was it? What color? She runs and runs so that she hears the blood pounding in her ears and feels the muscles burning in her legs. Must get help, must save Anne...

Line shakes her head to free herself from the memory. Yet her body is still trembling in fear. Even now, a year later, she can still see her friend's *tormented* (痛苦的) expression. It's like a nightmare that isn't over when she awakens. Because Anne isn't coming back. Her best friend is gone, and the same thing could have happened to her. Why did Anne die while she was allowed to live?

She's holding the newspaper clipping with both hands. Reading them again, for the *umpteenth* (第无数次的) time. “Young Girl Raped and Murdered on the *Outskirts* (市郊; 郊区) of Oslo. There is no *suspect* (嫌疑人) as yet (到目前为止), and the police have few clues. There was,

however, one witness at the scene of crime." She stared down at the latest news clipping. "The North Beach homicide is still unsolved. The case has been put on hold after six months investigation."

Carefully, she lays the clippings back in her jewelry box. "They still haven't found him. But he's out there somewhere!" screams a voice in the back of her head.

She has seen him. Just a quick glimpse of a face in the crowd in front of the National Theater. It wasn't until after she'd looked away, that she remembered who he was. But when she searched the crowd again, he was gone. "It's just your imagination," she'd said to herself. "You're day-dreaming again. It couldn't possibly have been him."

Line's had so many nightmares since that fatal night, and painful memories haunt her through the day. If they had only waited for the late-night bus instead of *hitchhiking* (沿途免费搭便车旅行). He had seemed nice enough, quite charming actually. And it was such a long wait for the bus. The offer of getting a lift home was too tempting to ignore. But Anne would have been alive today if only.....

He hums a tune as he's hanging there. He didn't realize that working as a window-washer would be so easy. All it takes is getting hold of some equipment, and the next time you know, you're meeting smiling faces everywhere. The

building is tall, six floors. He's still working on the second level, so he has a long way to go. With bucket and *squeegee* (橡皮刷帚; 涂刷器) in hand, he's just an ordinary window-washer, or so they think.

When he first saw her in front of the theater, he had panicked. The long blonds *ponytail* (马尾巴) and *naive* (天真的; 幼稚的; 轻信的) expression were easily recognizable. That was the reason he had decided to take her friend first. She seemed more lively, she had really excited him. He hadn't counted on the timid blonde to cause any problems. She had sat in the car, *petrified* (吓呆的), while he had ripped the clothes off her friend and pulled down his own pants.

But the little bitch ran off! While he had been fully concentrating on the dark girl, he heard the car door slam. "Christ, some friend just running off like that," he had said with a loud *snicker* (暗笑; 傻笑). "I guess she's a bit shy."

Line, that was her name. Line.

He smiles as he draws the squeegee down the window-pane. The last window on this floor. His brow *furrows* (起皱纹) as he thinks. She's the only one who knows what he looks like.^② If she disappears, there's no other witness who can identify him. Did she see him in front of the National

Theater? He doesn't think so. He has a wonderful surprise for her. And he loves surprises!

Line is startled out of her thoughts by the telephone ringing. Hesitantly, she lifts the receiver.

“Hello?”

“Hi, it's Kristoffer. Could you do me a huge favor and take care of Miriam for the weekend? Nina and I are taking the ferry to Denmark with some people from work, and it would be more *tedious* (单调乏味的;冗长的) than fun if she had to come with us.”

“No problem. But only if you bring her here. I don't feel much like leaving the house today.”

Line didn't say anything about being scared out of her wits, that after she had seen him today she'd wanted to hide under the covers and never come out.

Even though Miriam would surely make a *mess of* (把……弄脏或弄乱) the house, it would be nice to have some company this weekend. She loved Miriam. Only three years old, but she understands everything that's said to her.

To Kristoffer she says, “I'm looking forward to seeing if she's grown any since the last time. Besides, I could use the companionship right about now. I've been thinking about Anne.”

"Line, you must try to forget about it. I know it was awful, but there was nothing you could have done to save her. Stop blaming yourself. I'm sure Miriam will be able to cheer you up."

Line feels a little better after talking to her brother, and starts to prepare something to eat for her guest. In the kitchen her thoughts wander to her last meeting at the police station: "He's not going to bother you," Office Jorgensen had said. "He has probably left town already. The description you gave wasn't enough for us to find him. He has nothing to fear from you. So don't worry."

He has started whistling now. A low, pleasant sound. Just like any other window-washer satisfied with his work. He wipes the washing *blade* (涂刷刀) and dips it into the bucket. Another sparkling clean window. She doesn't live on the third floor either. Most likely she lives on the last floor. And she's also the type who would live alone. He knows what he has to do. She can't be allowed to go free anymore.

Originally, he had written her off as any kind of threat to him. She couldn't possibly identify him. It was dark, and she was scared. However, she was the only witness to what had happened that night. With her out of the way, he would be a completely free man. Every person is innocent

until proven guilty. And she will never have the chance to be his judge.

The fourth floor windows, dusty and sooty (满是煤烟的), stare *dismally* (阴沉地) at him as if to say, "Don't bother with us, we like being dirty." But he throws himself into his work anyway. Just as he has done on all the other levels. Everything must be done correctly. Someone might notice him, otherwise. He can't afford any more witnesses.

There's a bulge in the left-hand pocket of his *overalls* (工装裤). He has not come unarmed. In his mind, the blonde is already dead. One does not come out alive from a meeting with a *garrotte* (勒杀抢劫用的绳索), homemade or otherwise. Lovingly, he feels the handgrips and checks that the wire is properly connected. A beautiful, *lethal* (致命的;毁灭性的) wreath. All that needs to be done now is to encircle it around her neck and tighten. It would be over in a matter of minutes. Afterwards, he would finish up the few remaining windows, then stroll casually home. No one would remember that he'd ever been there.

On the second ring, Line crosses the room to answer the door. Kristoffer and Miriam had taken the shortcut through the loft. They live on the same level as Line, but in a different section of the building. Apartment A, B and C

have a common loft, so it wasn't just *coincidence* (巧合) that Kristoffer had arranged for Line to get apartment B. If anything should happen, she could get to her brother's apartment easily and quickly. Then there.

Miriam is jumping up and down as Line opens the door.

"Hi, sweetheart, give Auntie a hug!" It's a clumsy embrace as they also rub noses as part of their usual greeting.

"I guess I'm not needed here," laughs Kristoffer as he hands Line Miriam's things. "Nina's *practically* (几乎) climbed into the suitcase to check for the tenth time if she's forgotten anything. The taxi is going to be here in fifteen minutes and I don't think she's even started dressing! I can't wait to relax in the *lounge* (火车、轮船上的娱乐室) on the ship."

"Just go and have a great time. Miriam and I are going to have a lot of fun together." Line smiles. Her voice is calm and *collected* (镇定的; 泰然的). Was she actually worried just a few minutes ago? The murderer? How could he possibly find her? Besides, he's probably sunning himself on some beach in Spain and is afraid to come back to Norway.

She makes up a bed for Miriam next to her own. Miri-

am immediately jumps into the blankets and curls up for her nap. Line stays with her until she dozes off, then goes into the kitchen to turn on the oven. She stretches out on the sofa while waiting for the oven to warm up. She tried up to organize her thoughts. Her main problem is that she's hung up on what happened to Anne. She dreams about it, talks about it, even sees faces that just disappear ...

Slowly, she *massages* (按摩) her temples. It's getting hot inside. Probably coming from the sun heating up the roof. She gets up, opens the window wide and puts the chicken in the oven. Then she again stretches out on the sofa. How different this weekend will be with the sweet and funny Miriam to take care of. She's neither lonely nor frightened any more. Everything feels so wonderfully normal that she can actually close her eyes without seeing Anne's or his face on the inside of her eyelids.

Fifth floor. It's almost four-thirty. Not too long before people start streaming through the entrance coming home from work. He needs just a few more minutes. He's so close now, and yet ... as long as it isn't done, he can't be completely sure about the outcome.

The fair-haired, pony-tailed girl had led him straight to her home like a *well-behaved* (行为端正的) child. His

plan was going like *clockwork* (钟表机械; 发条装置). Nobody asks a window-washer who's doing his job and why he's there. Everyone assumes that somebody else has hired him. As a matter of fact, he hired himself. He chuckles at the thought of him being a *charity* (慈善) worker.

Thoroughly and *methodically* (有条不紊地), he washes window after window on the entire fifth floor. Soon it's only the sixth floor to go. She must be living there!

As he's about to hoist himself up to the last floor, a window opens just a couple of meters to his left. An arm swings out into the air and he catches a glimpse of a look of blonde hair being caught in the breeze as she leans out. She's given him free *access* (通道; 入口) to her apartment, as well as letting him know which room she'll be in! He lets his hand slide down to his left pants pocket.

Line sits up on the sofa rubbing her eyes. It's about time she checks to see if Miriam has awakened. She stretches and smiles out toward the sun — and sees his face *framed* (框住; 以……为背景) in the window! He already has one foot on the window sill. He's *smirking* (得意地笑) as he leaps in and throws himself over her. She *registers* (注意到) briefly the things he has in his hand. Two handles held together by a wire? Then she realizes that he is going to

use this thing to choke her, like he did Anne after raping her!

She's able to roll off the couch from underneath him, with just one thought in mind: Miriam! She isn't alone in the apartment. Miriam is also there.

“Miriam!”

Her scream *resounds* (回荡) off the walls, but Line, in her terror, is unaware of everything around her. Her full attention is on the garrotte, which he has *positioned* (放置) perfectly around her neck as if it were an *exquisite* (精致的) diamond choker. It takes him seconds before he realizes that she keeps *babbling* (模糊不清地说) a name. Confused, he stares down at her, out of control for a moment. Miriam? She was supposed to live alone, wasn't she? Is she trying to trick him into letting her go?

He tightens the wire around her neck, knowing that in one minute she'll be dead and he'll be free and clear. *Precisely* (准确地) at that moment, Miriam comes *scrampering* (惊奔) into the living room.

She lets out a *muffled* (沉闷的) noise, coming from the back of her throat. Surprised, he loosens his grip and turns to face her. It's the last thing he ever does. The *limber* (灵活的) dog's body *sails* (迅速行进) over the floor in one fluid motion, before she lands on top of the man's body